<u>REMARKS</u>

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 7, 2006. Claims 1 to 10, 17, 18, 21 to 30, 37, 38, 41 to 50, 52, 54 and 56 are pending in the application, with Claims 17, 18, 37, 38, 52 and 56 having been withdrawn. Of the claims under consideration, Claims 1, 21, 41 and 54 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 10, 21 to 30, 41 to 50 and 54 have again been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,631,407 (Mukaiyama). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns an information management apparatus for a device and related methods and media. In the apparatus, information regarding the particular device is stored and not dependent on the machine kind of the device. This information is transmitted to an external apparatus and changes in accordance with the attachment condition of option equipment of the device, indicating information on the option equipment which is attached to the device.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 1 is directed to an information management apparatus for transmitting data indicating information on a device to an external apparatus. The apparatus includes a storage unit, adapted for storing data indicating information on the device, the stored data being not dependent on a machine kind of the device; an acquisition unit, adapted for acquiring the data from the storage unit when the data to be transmitted to the external apparatus is not dependent upon the machine kind of the device, and acquiring the data indicating information on the device from a storage unit in the device when the data to be transmitted

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to the external apparatus is dependent upon the machine kind of the device, wherein the data dependent upon the machine kind of the device changes in accordance with an attachment condition of option equipment at the device and indicates information on the option equipment which is attached at the device; and a transmission control unit, adapted for transmitting the data acquired by the acquisition unit to the external apparatus. The data stored in the storage unit of the information management apparatus is not acquired from the device.

In contrast, Mukaiyama discloses that, if a change of the operation status of the printing device 10 is detected by the status monitoring part 303, an SNMP trap message indicating merely that "such a status change has occurred" is transmitted from the MIB controlling part 304 to the management server 20 (col. 12, lines 54-58). Moreover, in Mukaiyama, the management server 20 which received the SNMP trap message from the printing device 10 does not transmit the message itself to the client device 30, but instead transmits merely a "change notifying packet" to the client device 30 (col. 12, lines 58-62). Then, the client device 30 which received the change notifying packet issues a screen information request to the management server 20 (col. 12, lines 62-65). Subsequently, the management server 20 which received the screen information request obtains various MIB objects of the printing device 10, and transmits screen information according to the obtained MIB objects to the client device 30 (col. 12, line 65 to col. 13, line 3). Therefore, the relevant screen information is not obtained from the printing device 10 but rather from the HDD 212 (col. 8, line 67; col. 9, lines 14-30).

As just described, it is apparent that, in Mukaiyama, the SNMP trap message (also the change notifying packet) merely indicates that the status has changed,

but does not indicate what the current status is. Instead, the data indicating the current status is the MIB object or the screen information, which is separate from these messages. Moreover, in Mukaiyama, the MIB object is not transmitted from the printing device 10 to the client device 30, and the screen information is not obtained from the printing device 10.

However, Mukaiyama fails to disclose or suggest at least the features of data, which is obtained from the printing device, is to be transmitted to the client device, is dependent upon the machine kind of the device, changes in accordance with an attachment condition of option equipment at the device, and indicates information on the option equipment which is attached to the device, as featured in amended independent Claim 1.

In light of the deficiencies of Mukaiyama as disclosed above, Applicant submits that amended independent Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

Amended independent Claims 21, 41, and 54 are directed to a method, a computer-readable memory medium, and an information management program, respectively, substantially in accordance with the apparatus of Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 21, 41, and 54 are also now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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